

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
CORPUS CHRISTI DIVISION

MARC VEASEY, *et al.*,

Plaintiffs,

v.

RICK PERRY, *et al.*,

Defendants.

Civil Action No. 2:13-cv-193 (NGR)
(Consolidated Action)

**DECLARATION OF WILLIAM (BILLY) R. EDWARDS, III IN SUPPORT OF
PLAINTIFFS' REQUEST FOR ATTORNEYS' FEES AND COSTS**

1. My name is William (Billy) R. Edwards, III. I am over 18 years of age, of sound mind, and fully competent to make this declaration. I have personal knowledge of the facts stated herein and they are all true and correct.

2. I have been an attorney for 33 years. My entire career I have practiced in civil litigation with The Edwards Law Firm in Corpus Christi, Texas. *See* attached résumé as *Exhibit A*. I am Board Certified in Personal Injury Trial Law and in Civil Appellate Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. I have litigated complex cases in multiple state and federal jurisdictions, at the trial and appellate levels, including cases that involved questions of statutory interpretation and constitutional law.

3. Through these experiences, I have become familiar with the demands that complex federal litigation makes upon the attorneys and equally familiar with the skills it takes to prosecute such a case from discovery, pre-trial motions, trial and appeal, to a successful completion in the United States District Court.

4. I have reviewed the declarations of the lawyers involved in this litigation. I have reviewed their resumes and vitas, and have made myself aware of their level of experience. That experience demonstrates that they are all lawyers with specialized expertise and skills.

5. I am familiar with the prevailing market rate for attorneys who litigate in the state and federal courts in and around Corpus Christi, Texas. Prevailing rates for attorneys who I describe as “senior lawyers” practicing in Corpus Christi, range from \$400 to \$750 per hour, and mid-level lawyer rates range from \$300 to \$350 per hour, and young-level lawyer at \$250 to \$275. This statement of rates is commensurate with a rate this Court recently found to be reasonable. *Edwards v. 4JLJ, LLC*, No. 2:15-CV-299, 2019 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 51051, at *7 (S.D. Tex. 2019) (for a 20-year lawyer seeking attorneys’ fees as sanctions, “The Court finds \$400 per hour to be a reasonable rate, within the range of prevailing market rates.”); *see also*, *Rodriguez v. City of Corpus Christi*, No. 2:13-CV-134, 2016 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 159987, at *2 (S.D. Tex. 2016) (reference to “this Court’s previously adopted hourly rate of \$450 per hour”). With respect to the range for senior lawyers, the higher end of the range is reserved for lawyers with specialized skill sets. Moreover, the same senior lawyers whose rates are \$400-\$450 in Corpus Christi expect up to \$1,000 per hour, or more, when practicing in Houston. *See N. Atl. Operating Co. v. Mike’s Worldwide, LLC*, No. H-16-3685, 2018 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 115753, at *6 (S.D. Tex. 2018) (billing up to \$840 per hour is customary at large firms in Houston).

6. I believe a caveat is important when comparing prevailing rates in the Corpus Christi area to the rates requested by the attorneys in this litigation: the attorneys in this litigation bring a specialized expertise in voting-rights and civil-rights cases that is not matched in Corpus Christi. This is not to say that no lawyers who practice in Corpus Christi cannot effectively participate in this kind of specialized litigation. It is to say that I’m aware of no attorney in Corpus

Christi who has focused his or her professional energy and time pursuing this type of litigation in the Corpus Christi area as the attorneys in this litigation have shown. This factor makes me opine that the lawyers in this litigation are better compared to the upper ranges of the prevailing rates that belong to those attorneys who have specialized skill sets that demand the highest rates.

7. The rates requested by the attorneys whose time is the subject of the motions in this case are within the range of prevailing rates of Corpus Christi. Additionally, when the specialized expertise of the attorneys is taken into account, the requested rates are more than reasonable.

8. I have spent eight hours reviewing the pleadings, orders, time records, declarations and resumes in preparing this declaration. While I normally would request an hourly rate much higher than \$450 per hour if retained to pursue litigation, a reasonable rate for my services in preparing this affidavit is \$450 per hour making the reasonable and necessary fee for my services \$2,700.

Further affiant sayeth not.

SIGNED on the 11th day of April, 2019.

/s/
William (Billy) R. Edwards, III

William (Billy) R. Edwards, III

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Billy Edwards is a lawyer licensed in 1986, who is Board Certified – Personal Injury Trial Law and Board Certified – Civil Appellate Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. He is a partner in The Edwards Law Firm, where he has practiced since 1986.

Education

BBA - ACCOUNTING | 1982 | CORPUS CHRISTI STATE UNIVERSITY

JD - WITH DISTINCTION | 1986 | ST. MARY'S SCHOOL OF LAW

Court Admission

TEXAS - 1986

FEDERAL COURTS

U.S. Supreme Court - 1994

U.S. Court of Appeals, 5th Circuit - 1997

U.S. District Court, Southern District of Texas - 1987

U.S. District Court, Western District of Texas - 2003

U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Texas - 2014

PRO HAC VICE

District Court, Oklahoma County, State of Oklahoma, *Brown v. Bridgestone/Firestone, Inc.*, Case No. CJ-89-8545 (1990)

State Court of Fulton County, State of Georgia, *Beauchamp v. The B.F. Goodrich Co.*, Civil Action No. 93-VS-76932G (1998)

Superior Court of California, County of Alameda, State of California, *Quacchia v. DaimlerChrysler Corp.*, No. C-842383 (2001)

U.S. District Court, District of Massachusetts, *Hiller v. DaimlerChrysler Corp.*, Case No. 1:02-CV-10533 (2003)

10th Judicial Circuit Court, Polk County, Florida, *Chan v. DaimlerChrysler Corp., et al.*, Cause No. 53-2003 (2003)

U.S. District Court, middle District of Tennessee, *Doerflinger v. DaimlerChrysler Corp.*, No. 1 02-0092 (2003)

U.S. District Court, Southern District of Indiana, New Albany Division, *Gibson-Roberts v. DaimlerChrysler Corp., et al.*, Cause No. 4:03-CV-0234 (2004)

Circuit Court of Jackson County, Kansas City, Missouri, *Kateusz v. DaimlerChrysler Corp., et al.*, Case No. 04-CV-200095 (2004)

U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana, *Brumfield v. DaimlerChrysler Corp., et al.*, Civil Action No. 03-2914 (2004)

Superior Court of the State of Arizona, County of Maricopa, *Link v. Ford Motor Co., et al.*, No. CV 2002-024788 (2005)

Court of Common Pleas, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, *Parsa v. DaimlerChrysler Corp., et al.*, Case No. CV-0522784 (2005)

U.S. District Court, District of Montana, Butte Division, *Ford v. DaimlerChrysler Corp.*, Cause No. CV-05-18-BU-RFC (2005)

Montana Second Judicial District Court, Silver Bow County, State of Montana, *Gageby v. Goodyear Dunlop Tires North America, Ltd.*, No. DV-08-480 (2008)

Montana Second Judicial District Court, Silver Bow County, State of Montana, *Rooney v. Wyeth Pharmaceuticals, Inc., et al.*, No. DV-11-345 (2011)

U.S. District Court, District of Kansas, *Hall v. General Motors, LLC*, Case No. 2:12-CV-02391 (2012)

U.S. District Court, District of South Dakota, Western Division, *Bishop v. The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co., et al.*, Civ. No. 13-5062-JLV (2013)

Yakima County Superior Court, State of Washington, *Clutchey v. Goodyear Dunlop Tires North America, Ltd., et al.*, No. 09-2-01831-5 (2014)

District Court of Oklahoma County, State of Oklahoma, *Bowling v. DXP Enterprises, Inc., et al.*, Case No. CJ-2015-4816 (2015)

BAR ASSOCIATION AND OTHER MEMBERSHIPS

State Bar of Texas

- Member State Bar College
- State Bar Foundation Fellow
- District 11 Grievance Committee Member, 1994 – 1997
- Pattern Jury Charge Committee (Malpractice, Premises & Products Liability), 2016 – present

International Academy of Trial Lawyers

- Fellow, 2018 - present

American Board of Trial Advocates

- Member, 2015 – present

Texas Trial Lawyers Association

- Associate Director, 1990 – 1995
- Director, 1996 – 1998
- Member, 1986 - present

American Association for Justice

- Member, 1986 – present

Publications and Presentations

Speaker, Responsible Third Parties and Irresponsible Non-parties, State Bar of Texas, Advanced Personal Injury Law Course, Summer 2009.

Speaker, Focus Groups, Jury Questionnaires and Trial Consultants: Practice, Practices and Best Practices, State Bar of Texas, Advanced Personal Injury Law Course, Summer 2008.

Author, Speaker, Voir Dire After Cortez v. HCCI-San Antonio, Inc., 159 S.W.3d 87 (Tex. 2005), Corpus Christi Bar Association, Appellate Seminar, January 2006.

Speaker, Voir Dire, Dallas Bar Association, Summer 2005.

Author, Speaker, Building the Record for Appeal and Technical Traps to Avoid, Texas Trial Lawyers Association Advanced Personal Injury Course, March 2000.

Author, Speaker, The Petition for Review, Civil Appellate Seminar “The Trial Lawyer’s Approach”, August 1999.

Author, Speaker, The Automotive Product Liability Case, Texas Trial Lawyers Association Fall seminar, November 1998.

Author, Speaker, Theories of Recovery in Automotive Product Liability Claims, Texas Trial Lawyers Association Belize seminar, Summer 1998.

Author, Overview of the 1995 Legislative Changes to Exemplary Damages, Corpus Christi Lawyer, Winter 1995.

Author, Speaker, Common Pitfalls of Preservation of Error, TTLA Seminar, August 1995; Corpus Christi Advanced Civil Trial Law Seminar, April 1995; TTLA Seminar, August 1994.

Author, Tires and Rims: Defect, Not Mismatch, Trial, May 1992.

Author, Statute of Limitations in Wrongful Death Cases. TTLA Seminar, August 1990.

Author, Unlawful Solicitation, State Bar of Texas Advanced Personal Injury Law Course, July 1990.

Author, Generating Business Ethically and the Felonious Alternative, TTLA Seminar, August 1989.

Author, Mental Anguish, Cases and Outline, TTLA Seminar, August 1988.